

**STATE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION  
FULL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
DOVER, DELAWARE**

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2017**

The October monthly meeting of the Delaware State Human Relations Commission was held by video-conference the Cannon Building, 861 Silver Lake Boulevard, Conference Room A, Dover, Delaware; and the Carvel Building, 820 N. French Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor SOS Conference Room, Wilmington, Delaware.

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**Attendance:**

**Commission Members Present:** Chairperson Calvin Christopher; Commissioners Mashoor Awad, Jamaal Bivens, Diaz Bonville, Whittona Burrell, Erika Caesar, Chok-Fun Chui, Earnest Gulab, Pameela Kaza, Nancy Maihoff, Olga Ramirez, Walter Smith Jr. and Rosemarie Williams. DAG Carla Jarosz.

**Commission Members not present:** Commissioners Bernice Edwards (excused), Kerri Harris (excused), Doug James (excused), Gail Launay-Tarlecki (excused), Lorenzo Murdaugh (unexcused), Roy Sudler Jr. (unexcused), Robert Watson Jr. (excused) and Dolores Finger Wright (unexcused).

**Staff from Division of Human Relations Office:** Romona Fullman, Vincent Petroff, and Kelly Fox.

**Members of the public present:** Sara Fuller, John Ruffin and Sara Herbert.

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**I Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Christopher at 5:38 p.m. followed by a period of silent meditation.

**II Approval of Minutes**

The minutes for the September SHRC meeting were submitted. A motion was made to accept the minutes by Commissioner Olga Ramirez. The motion was seconded by Pameela Kaza. A vote was taken, motion carries with no opposition.

**III Members of the Public Present:** Sara Herbert, Dover Human Relations Commissioner (DHRC) at-large, appeared before the SHRC to follow-up on a previous request to establish a relationship between the DHRC and the SHRC. Chair Calvin Christopher responded that he is

looking for a Commissioner from Kent County to volunteer to serve as a liaison with the DHRC. Following a discussion, Commissioner Nancy Maihoff volunteered to serve as the liaison between the SHRC and the DHRC.

Sara Fuller appeared before the Commission to report two matters of concern with the hopes the SHRC might be the entity to help address them. First was a recent incident where the mascot for the Caesar Rodney High School was depicted in a photograph holding a sign with a racial epithet written on it. The second matter of concerns was about racial discrimination/retaliation in State Government and recent news coverage. Ms. Fuller indicated that she recognizes that most of the Commission's work is not with discrimination in state employment, but she feels these matters are connected. She requested the Commission consider what they could do in this area. She suggested that perhaps mediation and diversity training is a possible option.

John Ruffin appeared before the Commission to report concerns about the climate, culture, and bias, in state government that persist despite diversity training and EEO meetings.

Chair Calvin Christopher thanked the guests for appearing and welcomed them to attend the November SHRC meeting at which the Acting Secretary of the Dept. of Human Resources will share information about the new department.

#### IV Chair's Report

<i>Topic / Discussion</i>	<i>Actions to be Taken</i>	<i>Leaders</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
<u>Update Joint Legislative Oversight Sunset Committee Recommendations</u> – Chair Calvin Christopher reported on the early retirement/resignation received to-date from SHRC Commissioners including Stephen Elkins, J. Michael Harpe, Janet Maull-Martin, Rose Mary Hendrix, Jordan Hines and Roy Sudler Jr. (effective December 2017) He also reported that he will be resigning from the Commission. The effective date of his resignation is yet to be determined. He expressed the date will be after the successful implantation of the JLOSC Recommendations. This reduces the membership number to 19. Going forward the attendance requirements will continue to be reviewed as will Commissioners reported community engagement activities. Commissioner Mashoor Awad announced his			

<p>resignation due to his demanding work schedule. He will continue to support and promote the Commission and asked permission to recommend another representative from the Muslim community to replace him. Chair Calvin Christopher asked that he send an email regarding his resignation.</p> <p>Commissioner Nancy Maihoff suggested the needs of the Commission be considered when looking at potential Commissioners – such as someone with media and communications skills and expertise. Chair Calvin Christopher advised that diversity and skills among items consideration when looking at potential Commissioners.</p>			
<p><u>State Department of Human Resources</u> – Chair Christopher reported the Acting Secretary for the Department of Human Relations has agreed to attend the November Commission meeting to share information on the new department and to briefly entertain questions. He asked that Commissioner any specific questions be submitted in advance of the meeting to allow for the Acting Secretary to prepare for the meeting.</p>	<p>Submit items for discussion to Chair Calvin Christopher</p>	<p>All Commissioners</p>	<p>Before November 9th</p>
<p><u>Governor’s Council on Equal Employment Opportunity Committee (GCEEO)</u> – It was reported that GCEEO members were contacted and informed that the Council was dissolved by HB4. The work of the Council has been shifted to the new state Division of Diversity and Inclusion (in the Department of Human Resources.</p>			
<p><u>Commission By-Laws</u> – Chair Christopher reported the Legislative Committee is working with the Deputy Attorney General to draft legislation for the revisions to the By-Laws.</p>	<p>Continue work on draft legislation</p>	<p>Commissioner Kerri Harris and DAG Carla Jarosz.</p>	<p>Undefined</p>

<p><u>International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAORHA)</u> – Chair Christopher reported that he and Director Romona Fullman attended this conference a few weeks ago. Additional information will be provided in the Director’s Report.</p>			
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## V Director’s Report

<i>Topic / Discussion</i>	<i>Actions to be Taken</i>	<i>Leaders</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
Director’s report to be sent electronically.	Director’s report to be sent electronically	Kelly Brown	Undefined.
<p>Director Fullman shared that there is a Department of State/Office of Management and Budget hearing on November 6, 2017. This is an opportunity for Commissioners to communicate financial needs for the Fiscal Year 2019 budget.</p> <p>Director Fullman reported the agency budget decreased from the previous year impacting participation in community engagement activities and internal/external training and discussion forums. She also urged SHRC Committees to determine and document any budget needs (for any activities planned for FY2019) for consideration in the budget process (happening now).</p>	<p>Attend hearing Monday, November 6, 2017</p> <p>Submit outreach events</p>	<p>All Commissioners</p> <p>All Commissioners</p>	<p>Monday, November 6, 2017</p> <p>Undefined</p>
Director Romona Fullman expressed gratitude to Commissioners and Division staff members who have participated in outreach events.			
Director Romona Fullman expressed appreciation for the guests that attended this evening. She also thanked Commissioner Nancy Maihoff for			

volunteering to serve as a liaison with the Dover Human Relations Commission.			
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## VI Committee Reports

<i>Topic / Discussion</i>	<i>Actions to be Taken</i>	<i>Leader</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
<u>Public Awareness Committee</u> – Chair Christopher is looking for a Commissioner interested and willing to volunteer to chair this Committee.			
<u>Legislation Committee</u> – No report.			
<p><u>Community Response Committee</u> – Commissioner Nancy Maihoff reported that the Committee will be meeting following the adjournment of the full Commission meeting to finish the Commission Mentoring Manual.</p> <p>Commissioner Nancy Maihoff reported that at a recent meeting with Senator Brian Bushweller (on a non-SHRC matter) she learned that when seeking state funds it is important that legislators know the organization, the work it does and the value to Delawareans. She stated that Commissioner Bushweller encouraged individuals to meet with their Legislature.</p>	Complete Mentoring Manual	Commissioner Maihoff	Undefined
<u>Governor’s Council on Equal Employment Opportunity Committee (GCEEO)</u> – Chair Christopher reported that the GCEEO has been dismantled. He requested that it be removed from future agendas.			

## VII Old Business

<i>Topic / Discussion</i>	<i>Actions to be Taken</i>	<i>Leader</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
Sunshine Fund – An envelope was circulated in both Dover and Wilmington for contributions. An accounting for funds was provided to Commissioners.			
Commission Mashoor Awad – Expressed gratitude to the Commissioners and Division Staff. He stated that it has been an honor to serve on the Commission.			

### **VIII New Business**

<i>Topic / Discussion</i>	<i>Actions to be Taken</i>	<i>Leader</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
<p>Director Romona Fullman asked Commissioners if they felt it was appropriated to send a letter to the Caesar Rodney School District concerning the incident involving their mascot or to send the general letter of support previously developed by the Commission.</p> <p>A motion was made by Commissioner Erika Caesar to draft a targeted letter to the Caesar Rodney School District. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Olga Ramirez. Following discussion a voted was taken. All in favor, no opposition. Motion carried. The following Commissioners were present for the vote: Chairperson Calvin Christopher; Commissioners Mashoor Awad, Jamaal Bivens, Diaz Bonville, Whittona Burrell, Erika Caesar, Chok-Fun Chui, Earnest Gulab, Prameela Kaza, Nancy Maihoff, Olga Ramirez, Walter Smith Jr. and Rosemarie Williams.</p> <p>A meeting is to be requested with the Caesar Rodney School District and the Secretary of Education. Date</p>	<p>Draft letter</p> <p>Develop agenda and schedule meeting</p>	<p>Commissioner Chok-Fun Chui</p> <p>Community Response Committee</p>	<p>Undefined</p> <p>Undefined</p>

and agenda are to be developed by the Community Response Committee and Commissioner Erika Caesar.			
Director Romona Fullman encouraged Commissioners to draft a statement to be read at the budget hearing.	Draft a statement to be issued at the Budget hearing	Undefined	November 6, 2017
DAG Carla Jarosz reported that the Department of Justice is has been asked to join in the <i>Masterpiece Cakeshop, Ltd. v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission</i> Supreme Court case.			
DAG Carla Jarosz reported that she and Zoe Plerhoples are in the process of planning a legal training for Commissioners in January.	Host a legal training	DAGs Carla Jarosz and Zoe Plerhoples	January

## IX Good News

<i>Topic / Discussion</i>	<i>Actions to be Taken</i>	<i>Leader</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
Commissioner Prameela Kaza advised that the Indian American Friendship Council's 20 <sup>th</sup> Annual Legislative Conference will be held on October 31.	Details about the annual conference will be emailed		
Commissioner Diaz Bonville shared that he will be retiring December 24 <sup>th</sup> , which is also his birthday.			

## XI Meeting Adjourned

The Commission meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:26 p.m. by Chair Christopher.